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The Parcel Post.

The editor of Successful Farming says:

One of the great needs of the American farmer today is the parcels post. The present rate charges on parcels of merchandise sent through the mails is one cent per ounce on parcels weighing not more than four pounds. In previous issues of Successful Farming we have shown the great convenience and saving that would come through the inauguration of the parcel post whereby articles of merchandise weighing as high as eleven pounds could be delivered through the mails at a charge not to exceed 25 cents. As it is now merchandise weighing over four pounds, must be sent through express companies who charge an enormous rate. It is claimed by those in position to know that these companies are making annual dividends of from 100 to 150 per cent, simply getting rich at the expense of the farmer and common people, when the government could carry packages of greater weight than they do at present at a much lower cost. There are many articles of merchandise that could be sent through the mails if the rate of postage for sending them was reduced to a rate as is charged by other countries where the parcel post system is practiced.

Twenty-two countries, including Great Britain, Germany, Austria and Switzerland have the parcel post and their Post Office department are making money out of the system. In England a 11 lb. package is carried for 25 cents, in Germany the same weight package is carried for 12 cents, while in Switzerland a package weighing as high as 110 lbs. is carried sixty-two miles for 60 cents.

The United States conforms to the parcel post system of Britain and Germany in sending parcels to those countries. Successful Farming readers can send a parcel weighing four pounds to Great Britain for 48 cents, but to send the same parcel through the mails ten miles distant will cost them 64 cents. If the post office departments of the foreign countries we have mentioned can make annual profits through their parcel post system, why cannot the United States do the same thing?

The large deficit last year seen in the post office department came largely through the expense incurred in operating our splendid system of R. F. D. The average rural carrier making a drive of twenty-five miles carries a light load, requiring but little service. It would not necessitate any additional expense on the part of the government for the same carrier to take parcels for delivery. Such a system would mean an increased revenue for the post office department and a great saving to the farmer's pocket-book. As it is now, the express companies charge rates altogether too high, with special rates granted to large shippers, thus taking the bulk of the profits out of the common people that in the main could be served cheaper and better through a parcel post system, where parcels would be delivered at the farmer's door without additional charges.

The express companies are fighting hard against the enactment of a parcel post law by Congress. They will

spend money freely at the next session of Congress to defeat the proposed parcel post bill. We must meet their attacks. Successful Farming proposes to help its subscribers in fighting for their rights. We want to fight shoulder to shoulder in this matter. Inform your congressman that you expect him to do his utmost in supporting the parcel post bill before the next Congress. Study the parcel post question from every standpoint, and help to win a needed service for the country.

We found the following item on the same subject, in an exchange simply credited as noted in the item.

Good arguments for the parcels post were advanced at the National Farmers' Congress. Said Hon. John Lamb, "The parcels post is a success wherever it is put in operation. It is admitted that so far as letters and small packages are concerned the Government service is better than private service could be. If better on letters and small packages why will it not be better on large packages? The present rate on fourth-class matter is practically prohibitive. A parcel post at reasonable rates will be of incalculable benefit to the farmer, the gardener, the retail dealer and even the manufacturer." So evident a proposition admits of little dispute. The express companies do not try to argue openly, but they seem to have ways of making themselves heard more effectively at Washington than the best efforts of those who have the weight of argument, but light pocket books.

Plant Fruit Trees in Fall.

Prof. W. F. Massey is not yet a convert to the New Horticulture. This can be seen from an article on planting trees which he wrote for the Progressive Farmer. Probably he has not tested it. His idea of fall planting is even more applicable to Florida than it is to North Carolina. If you have trees to put out, do so in the fall if possible. We certainly advise a trial of the method of the new horticulture. Set part of your trees by that method and then, if your faith fails, go back to the old way for the rest. If you do this, Prof. Massey's directions are good and clear. We omit the list of varieties, which he recommends, as being unsuited to this state.

In the South all orchard planting should be done in the fall. Our soil does not freeze deeply in winter, and the trees will be making new feeding fibers before the weather is warm enough in spring to start the tops to swelling.

No matter how carefully a tree is dug from the nursery the feeding roots, that is the small fibres which are alone concerned in getting food from the soil, are all dried up and destroyed. Hence in planting we should prune the roots rather closely, say to six inches all around, for the new fibres will start more readily from a clean-cut surface than from the old dried up rootlets. But when a tree is set in spring our hot weather

comes so early that the tops leaf out and the tree is apt to get exhausted before root hairs enough are formed to supply it with water. Therefore we advise fall planting.

Buy Direct From the Nursery.—Do not deal with a traveling salesman, no matter if he represents a reliable nursery, for by dealing directly with the nursery you can always get better trees and at lower prices. Do not let any one persuade you that far-fetched trees are better than home-grown ones. Get the trees from the nearest reliable nursery. Send the nurseryman (or more than one of them) a list of what you want to plant, and ask him to put his lowest prices on the list for cash, and tell him that anything on the list that he has not, must not have something else substituted for it, but that you want just what you order and nothing else.

Plant Year-Old Trees.—Never plant any tree older than one year from the graft or bud.

Of course no one ever plants peach trees older than this, but when it comes to apples and pears, etc., people want big trees. Now if you buy the ordinary three or four-year-old apple trees it will be utterly impossible to get them into the shape you should. The nurseryman knows that people buy trees, as a rule, by height, and he grows them as tall as possible. At the end of the first year he heads them back slightly, and in the crowded nursery rows they start unsymmetrical heads and too high from the ground, and when you plant these old trees you have got to accept the nursery head and the tall stem.

But if you plant a yearling tree it is a mere switch full of live buds all ready to start. Then you can cut it so as to form the head of the tree where the head always should be in the South, only a few inches from the ground. As Mr. Hales, the great Georgia peach grower, said last winter at the meeting of the Virginia Horticultural Society: "What do you want with a trunk to a fruit tree more than enough to hold the head? In my big orchard in Georgia I have no such thing as a step-ladder and do not need any. Last summer a man sat on the ground under one of my trees and gathered half the crop on the tree before getting on his feet."

Pruning the Sprouts.—Therefore in planting a tree I would select a one-year tree, would prune the roots carefully, and would then set it, if possible, when the earth is not wet. I would put the top soil in the bottom of the hole, but never anything like manure in contact with the roots. I would ram every inch of soil as put in as tightly as setting a gate post, and would never allow the earth to be settled by pouring water in the hole. Then when the tree is set cut the top off about eighteen to twenty inches from the ground. It is very common to see tall stemmed trees here with the bark killed by sun scald on the southwest side. With the short stem one can easily stick a shingle on that side to keep the sun off till the top spreads to shade it, as it will in one season with such a short stem. Peach trees we would head not over eight or ten inches from the ground. Not only does the low head soon pro-

tect the stem from the sun, but the tree is more accessible for spraying and gathering the fruit, and a tall trunk merely makes the reverse of this, with the added tendency to blow over by the wind.

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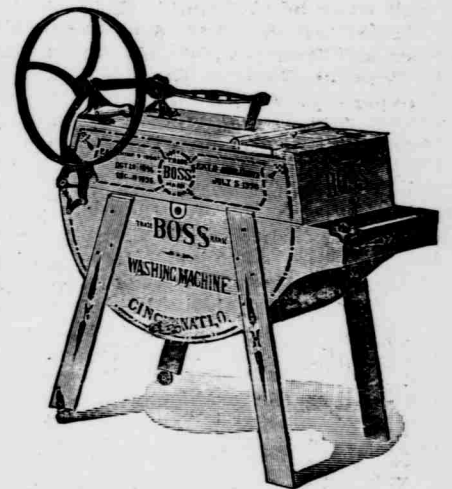
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